



Neosho National Fish Hatchery

NEWSLETTER

Spring was in full effect here at the hatchery – we had plenty of rain and the flowers and critters have been abundant!





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Things at the Neosho National Fish Hatchery have been heating up lately, in more ways than one, but especially on the Fahrenheit scale! We've been busy with our sturgeon, mussels, trout and moving forward with the shiners.

We had two spawning windows for our endangered pallid sturgeon, which doubled our normal approach to breeding them. Three of our female sturgeon showed signs of early spawning, and we provided all the manpower to harvest eggs back in February from them. Unfortunately, for whatever reason, none released their eggs, and the females were returned to the wild after being implanted with telemetry devices. May spawning produced two batches of male sperm. We currently have over 20 adults that will be held until next spring – hopefully our quality care will help these ones provide lots of healthy eggs for our continued breeding program.

We had two big outreach events this spring, with the biggest that come in June. Our early outreach events included the Veterans Fishing Derby and Open House. As you'll see, our warmer months draw quite the crowds – lots of people dipping their lines here at the hatchery on our two fishing days. We also partner with other groups with fishing manpower and equipment, so these months are especially busy in this way.

Our freshwater mussel breeding work continues to move forward, with glochidia being implanted on young largemouth bass this year. The young were removed from the tank after they dropped off and

are now tiny but growing in trays alongside the adults. We hope to move on with endangered Neosho mucket mussels soon, but for now we are getting all the kinks out with the more common fatmuckets. By drawing water in from our mussel pond, we can more easily monitor growth by keeping them indoors.

We are well into the second year's work with the endangered Topeka shiner minnows as well. We had such good success with last year, our first year with them, and we are continuing to see more breeding activity this time around. The adults are all in place and holdovers from last year's production are in a second raceway with the hopes of doubling production of this rare little fish. By the end of June we have been seeing hundreds of tiny fry from these special fish. We learn something new about them regularly. The Neosho NFH is the only federal facility working to breed these little fish, so there is plenty that has yet to be discovered about them.

And as always, we work to provide Missouri with about 100,000 pounds of rainbow trout per year. Since we are a federal hatchery, all our trout are designated for federal waters. In our case, they go to the lake created by the Army Corps of Engineers project from the 1950s that constructed Table Rock Dam near Branson MO. Around 235,000 rainbows are put in for the public to fish for – a great resource for anglers and cooks to enjoy! From an economic perspective, this program creates a return on investment of up to 20:1 – just another reason that we are proud to be giving back to our community, state and country in so many various ways.



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In May, hatchery staff went north to Kansas City KS to assist in the first of two outreach events with Urban Outdoor Adventures TV.

And in June we again assisted Urban American Outdoors and Kansas City Parks with the 11th Annual Urban Kids Fishing Derby in Kansas City, Missouri with more Service folk plus Neosho Friends to help.

Great partnership —
great outreach —
great fun!





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We received sturgeon eggs from Gavins Point NFH so we could learn more about fin curl in developing pallids – we are testing our pond water this year.



Here are our adult and young sturgeon on hand:





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June is the month for two of our biggest events of the year – Kids Fishing Day and the Seniors/Disabilities Derby. Hundreds were on hand for both events and lots of smiles were shared by all! Kids Fishing here:





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Seniors here:





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Every year on the final Saturday of June, the city puts on its big Celebrate Neosho event. We always support their Kids Fishing held that morning – donating some trout and fishing equipment for the people that attend. It is so great to support our wonderful partners!



Our final Final Word, from retiring hatchery manager David Hendrix.



Hi Everyone ☺,

I have had an opportunity to work at number of facilities over the years, gaining priceless experience. I enjoyed every facility and the knowledge/experience gained from my tenure at each place. Having said that, the best move I ever made was taking over the leadership at the Neosho National Fish Hatchery. Coming here, I not only inherited a wonderful hatchery, but, also a wonderful community. The Neosho National Fish Hatchery is the oldest operating federal fish, but, it's also has a park-like environment that entertains thousands of visitors; has the best Friends Group in the country; capable of producing any freshwater fish; has a beautiful visitor center; located in a wonderful community; has the best legislators; has the best partners; and many other attributes. It has been total joy managing this very special hatchery. Please take the time to stop by and enjoy a wonderful visit to one our nation's most precious jewels. Until next time, take care ☺ !!!!!

*Newsletter and photos by Bruce Hallman,
Environmental Education Specialist*

